THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE L.NARASIMHA REDDY

W.P.No.27243 of 2005

Date:23.12.2005

P.Krishnudu

----------Petitioner

A.P.S.R.T.C. and others

----------Respondents

ORDER:

The petitioner is employed as a conductor in APSRTC. He was issued a Charge Sheet, dated 20.08.1991, alleging certain cash and ticket irregularities and that he was required to submit the explanation as to why necessary disciplinary action shall not be taken against him. It is stated that the petitioner submitted his explanation to the same. Thereafter, the second respondent passed an order, dated 18.10.1991, imposing the penalty of stoppage of annual increment for a period of six months and further directed that it shall have the cumulative effect on the future increments. The petitioner challenges the same.

The only point urged by Sri A.K.Jayaprakash Rao, the learned counsel for the petitioner, is that the second respondent imposed the penalty of stoppage of annual increment for a period of six months with cumulative effect without conducting departmental enquiry. He placed reliance upon the judgment of the Apex Court in ***KULWANTH SINGH GILL v. STATE OF PUNJAB*** and submits that stoppage of increment is a major penalty and it cannot be imposed, except by conducting departmental enquiry.

Sri P.Vinayakaswamy, the learned Standing Counsel appearing for the respondents, on the other hand, submits that the penalty imposed against the petitioner itself is minimal, if the lapse on his part is taken into account.

It is a matter of record that the second respondent imposed the penalty of stoppage of annual increment for a period of six months with cumulative effect

on the allegation that the petitioner committed certain cash and ticket irregularities. Though a charge sheet was issued to the petitioner before the penalty was imposed, no departmental enquiry was conducted. In ***KULWANTH SINGH GILL's case*** (supra), the Supreme Court held that stoppage of increments with cumulative effect is a major penalty and it cannot be imposed, except by conducting departmental enquiry. However, the writ petition is filed at a very belated stage. Instead of either setting aside the impugned order or dismissing the writ petition, this Court is of the view that the penalty of stoppage of increment can be upheld, but its effect be treated as not cumulative. Since the petitioner filed the writ petition at a belated stage, he cannot be extended the benefit of the arrears.

Hence, the writ petition is partly allowed, directing that the order, dated 18.10.1991, shall be treated as the one for stoppage of annual increment for a period of six months without cumulative effect and that the petitioner shall not be entitled for any monetary benefits up to the date of this order. There shall be no order as to costs.

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23.12.2005

Jsu